

MINUTES OF HAVERHILL SELECTBOARD BUDGET REVIEW MEETING
TUESDAY February 7, 2017
6:00 PM

DRAFT SUBJECT TO REVIEW, CORRECTION AND APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING

Board Members Present: Chairman Wayne Chairman Fortier, Mike Bonanno, Chris Luurtsema, and Darwin Clogston. Tom Friel was excused.

Town Manager: Jo Lacaillade

Members of the Public Present: Fred Garafalo

Call Meeting To Order: Chairman Fortier called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

The Selectboard began their review of the budget.

Board of Selectmen: There was a brief discussion about what makes up the Professional Service line. The Board had no issue with the budget as presented.

Town Administration: There was a discussion regarding the 2% raise that the Advisory Budget Committee recommended; Darwin was not in favor and Mike Bonanno stated that he felt the same. Chris asked if the suggested increase was the same as other employees and it was stated that it was except for 2 officers who were scheduled to get a 3% increase. Wayne said that Tom has voiced to Wayne that he did not support the increase; Darwin said that he agreed with Tom. Mike Bonanno said he tended to agree with them. Darwin asked where Katie Moyse's money is coming from to which Jo said it is under financial administration. Chris asked Jo when she started on the salary she is at now to which she said March 2016 when she became interim and it stayed at that rate when she became permanent July 1st, 13 months ago. There was discussion about the language in the TM contract and whether it addressed raises, it does not. Chris said that since it had been a year since that salary was in place he was okay with the budget committee recommendation; Wayne stated he was also. There was more discussion about the issue. Mike Bonanno said that he changed his mind and agreed with the increase. There was discussion the 2% increase and whether the Board agreed with that figure. There was discussion that the salary for this position is up; Jo said that the number of hours she works is up from the previous manager also. They decided to come back to the salaries for all at the end.

Town Meeting: There was no issue with the budget.

Trustee of Trust Funds: There was no issue with this budget as presented.

Town Clerk: There was a brief discussion about the professional services line and staffing in this department, and travel. There were no issues with this budget. Chris said that he has really noticed how this department has done a lot to provide alternative hours and a positive attitude when dealing with the public. Wayne concurred.

Elections: Mike asked who pays the Supervisors when they work at the Village District Annual meetings. Jo said she did not know but would ask. She said they are elected by the Town and they have a statutory duty to attend those meetings so it may very well be the Town. Mike just wanted to make sure they are paid. The Board had no issues with this budget as presented.

Accounts and Auditing: There was a brief discussion about the number of hours it takes to do the minutes

and why it has been hired out. Jo said that when she was in the Finance Officer position she worked many hours over the 45 she was contracted for and with Jennifer those hours are held to 40 a week so already there is a loss of work product from the shortened hours and we already shuffled duties to try to work thru this. Farming the minutes out of house was an important step to managing the workload and is money well spent. They reviewed the staffing level of the office. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Tax Collector: The number of hours she works was discussed as well as if a 2% raise was warranted for a part-time employee. There was discussion about training that will be provided to Sandy during this year to learn the full process needed for deed searches. There was a question about why the phone line was going up, and Jo said that it was because Charter was not reliable and the Town switched to Fairpoint. The Board supports this budget as presented.

Treasurer: There was a discussion about how many hours the Treasurer works and whether he should be increased. Jo said that the Trustee of Trust Funds, Marie, has been at \$200 for as long as Jo can remember and should be considered for an increase also. They decided to decide this at the end when they talk about salaries.

Information Technology: There was discussion about the increase which is mostly due to the request for a new program from the Town Clerk and what benefits it would bring to the Town Clerk office. There is no increase to Jim's salary in this year's budget and there was a brief discussion to his hourly rate. Chris felt that we would have to hire a full time person if we ever have to replace Jim. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Revaluation of Property: There was a brief discussion about the costs included in this budget. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Legal Expenses: There was a brief discussion about pending issues that impact our legal budget. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Jo stated that she has been asked to make it clear at budget committee time next year and she wants the Selectboard to know that when she develops a budget, she starts at zero and builds up from there. It is not based on just increasing the line items any percentage. She reviews what was actual in the previous year and works from there. She felt it is important to note that.

Planning Board: The Board supports the budget as presented.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: The Board supports the budget as presented.

Clifford Memorial Building: There was a lengthy discussion about the stipend in the budget for Rich Clifford for his use of equipment. Darwin wanted to reiterate that he thinks that the cost to run the Clifford building vs. the revenue does not add up. Jo said that there are many functions that operate out of that building that is not revenue producing such as local fire departments and police department that use it. The summer camp operates out of that building and does not pay rent. It is seeing more use all the time. Wayne asked Darwin what his solution is. Darwin said he does not have one but it seems like a lot of money lost. Jo said that the liability has been discussed with Primex and they have no problem with the way we are handling Rich with reimbursement for his equipment. They ask that we have proof of his insurance and we will get that. The Board asked that he keep a log of time spent plowing. The Board supports the budget as presented.

James R. Morrill Building: Jo said that there was a lot of discussion at the budget committee level about adding money to this budget to deal with the heating and cooling issues. Jo asked them to give her this year to review the energy study and to bring in some professionals to give up to date costs for conversion and

what systems make sense now. The budget committee agreed to this. There was a discussion about the budgeted fuel amounts for both buildings. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Haverhill Bath Covered Bridge: The question was asked what Bath pays for with regards to the bridge. Jo said that she believes Bath pays the power bill. There was discussion about the broken boards that need replacing. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Cemetery: The bid is down for 2017. The Board supports the budget as presented.

Insurance Not Otherwise Allocated: The Board supports the budget as presented.

Regional Associations: The Board supports the budget as presented.

Sewer Line-Business Park: Darwin asked about something that had come up at a budget committee meeting from Howard regarding Woodsville being responsible for sewer line repairs. Jo said that she had found what she believes is what Howard was talking about but what she found does not say that Woodsville would pay for the repairs; what she found says that the \$12,500 that the Town collects for their portion of sewer hook-up fees is supposed to be going into a Capital Reserve account for future repairs and expansion; that has not been done up to this point. The Board changed the budget to reflect that if we have the \$25,000 hook-up the \$12,500 will still go to Woodsville and \$12,500 will go into the special account.

Police Department: There was discussion about the rate increase for retirement and the lower budget in health insurance. Darwin felt that we should use more of the part-time hours instead of overtime; he said the Chief said that felonies are down but overtime is not lower. Jo said that we only have 2 regular part-time officers who have full-time employment in other Towns. Darwin asked if we should be looking for more part-time. Jo said that they are always looking for part-time employees but when we do find people that are willing to work part-time, we still need to send them to the academy and that takes time. She said that even though felonies might be down, the level of paperwork involved has increased. Darwin said that we have added 80 hours of time with the hiring of 2 new officers. Jo said that both of them are still at the police academy, at least through April, and even after that there will be a period of time that they are not out on the streets alone. Darwin said that the new vehicle is not a regular cruiser. Jo said that they are finding that the smaller cars are less functional and the Chief wanted to go with a larger vehicle which is the Explorer. There was discussion regarding the professional services line.

Ambulance: There was a raise to the per capita fee this year based on not receiving Medicare reimbursements.

Fire Departments: Jo pointed out that the number for Haverhill Corner had gone down because of an accounting apportionment on their end. There was discussion about the air pack purchase. Darwin didn't feel like the fire departments had done any grant research. Darwin pointed out that they are asking for \$185,000 from the Town for this. There was discussion about the risk to the firemen if they don't purchase them. Wayne pointed out that Howard had talked about phasing in purchases going forward. There was a discussion about the difference in salaries for the different departments; why is Woodsville so much higher? Jo said that Chief Robbins had stated that they respond to a lot more accidents and Mike said that they respond to many more fires with their tower truck. Darwin asked why the town committees couldn't have non-residents on their committees but we have a fire chief making decisions on money that is not a resident. Jo said that they have worked really hard to bring all the departments to the table working together and that is getting there. Darwin said if there is a chief that does not pay taxes in this Town, they have no skin in the game he might not care what the tax rate is. The Fire Chiefs will be invited to the budget hearing to answer questions. Darwin will say no on the air packs, he does not believe they have done enough research. Jo said that she believes it is unfair to say that no grant work has been done to find funding because she has done some herself; what is fair to say is that no grant funding has been found,

those sources are getting smaller all the time. Darwin said that we are asking the Town departments to pay as you go but the Fire Departments finance; now even equipment purchases. Chris felt it was important for the Fire Departments to come to the budget hearing. The budget will be presented as is to the budget hearing.

Emergency Management: No issues. The budget does include the clean-up of one property.

Airport: The beacon was carried over from the 2016 budget so it is not being re-appropriated in 2017. The budget moves forward as presented to the budget hearing.

Highways: There are no capital projects in the 2017 budget. The level of employees is staying the same. There was discussion about the paving projects for 2017. Darwin said that North Country Council's schedule was different and French Pond was not in the schedule this soon. Jo said that Stuart has concerns about the Bath end of French Pond Road breaking up and he wanted to address it, it may not coincide with NCC's schedule. More discussion ensued about band aiding projects instead of fixing them correctly. Chris wondered if because we have a major repair of one of the trucks, is this number going to work There was discussion about what falls into that line; there was discussion about adding to that line item. Darwin felt there is a lot of slop in the highway budget so he thinks the money will cover it, he pointed to the culvert budget as one. Jo disagreed that there is a lot of slop in the budget. Darwin didn't want money put in the budget. More discussion about the tar budget and sand/gravel budget. The highway budget is moving forward as presented.

Woodsville Road Money: Based on a formula.

Highway Vehicle: The difference in the budgets is that Stuart had it in the budget to pay for the vehicle all at once and the TM budget has a lease purchase of 3 years which was supported by the Budget Committee. Darwin said that Woodsville is getting a new truck and maybe the Town should look at purchasing their old one. Jo asked why they are getting rid of it. Darwin said that he heard it doesn't have many miles on it and he hears that Woodsville has so much money; they don't know what to do with it all. Chris would ask that we check with other financing options to get the best rate.

Health Officer: No issues

Animal Control: Darwin said that the budget committee really discussed this issue about the revenue. Jo said that she has talked to Linda and Linda knows we expect to see more fines.

Welfare: Darwin and Jo have talked about the residency requirement and Jo said that the State Legislators have been approached many times but no one is willing to take up that cause. No issues with budget.

Parks and Recreation: There was discussion about the work done on the pool in 2016. There were donations of time and/or supplies from the Woodsville Fire District, the prisoners at Grafton County Jail and the Lions Club. Some repairs were paid for from the Turkey Plunge fund raising money. In the 2017 budget there was a new double wall chlorine tank for \$2500 budgeted and some new pool furniture that Jo felt should be purchased from other funds such as the Turkey Plunge so she had removed them from the TM budget. Darwin pointed out the revenue does not cover the costs of the program. Chris felt that the recreation department is necessary to help give youth options to keep them from turning to drugs. No issues with budget as presented.

Libraries: It was requested that the Library questionnaire include a question regarding what they have for investment accounts. It was noted that these libraries should be going to their precincts and asking for additional funds also.

Patriotic Purposes: There were no issues with this budget.

Culture & Heritage: There were no issues with this budget.

Conservation Commission: There were no issues with this budget

Economic Development: There were no issues with this budget

Debt Service: There were no issues with this budget although there was a brief discussion about building up the ending fund balance so TANS won't be as necessary.

There was discussion as to what the tax rate will be based on the budget as it sits really now. Jo gave an overview of where the revenues are projected to meet that tax rate. Chris asked Jo why she did not budget a raise for herself and she stated that it is her job to recommend raises for the other employees but felt that it should be the Board that determines hers. The Advisory Budget Committee did recommend a raise for the Town Manager. There was more discussion about the tax rate. Jo said that the Board will still have an opportunity to vote on the final budget after the budget hearing. She reminded the Board again that the tax rate is based on what we know today, if revenues come in different or changes in legislation cause a shortfall those numbers will change. Chris stated he would like the rate to stay level but 2 cents is not bad to accomplish all that is included in the budget. Darwin said that while 2 cents is not bad, he is opposed to any increase.

Recycling: Wayne said they can take 30K right off this budget; they have struggled with recycling and they bring up good points. If there are 1400 households and only 290 users why not put the burden on those users to pay for it. Last night it came to light that a vendor can offer the service, at their site, with their insurance; that will relieve the Town of all of that. Jo said that she had talked to Neil Robie today and he might also consider offering a "pay as you throw" recycling option. She said that he had also voiced his concern about the Town having a drop site that took both garbage and recycling on the same day and same times as the one he runs, about what that might do to his business. Jo pointed out that if the voters vote to put it back in they will understand how that affects the tax rate. Darwin asked what happens if no vendor steps forward. Wayne said that if they believe in recycling, they will find a way. Chris believes that if people realize how much it really costs, they will not support the impact to taxes either. The Board favored striking recycling from the budget.

CASA: There were no issues with this budget.

Tires/Electronic Collection Day: There were no issues with this budget.

Ammonoosuc Community Health: There was a brief discussion about why they weren't eligible for the CDBG grant that they were trying for. There were no issues with this budget.

No. Country Home Health: There were no issues with this budget.

RSVP: There were no issues with this budget.

Horse Meadow Senior Center: Darwin said he had visited the center and it was phenomenal. There were no issues with this budget.

Visiting Nurse & Hospice-VNA: This is a petitioned warrant article so it will appear in the budget. The Advisory Budget Committee is not supporting this warrant article. The Board does not support the warrant article.

White Mtn. Mental Health: There were no issues with this budget.

Tri-County Comm Action: Jo reviewed why she recommended a cut to this budget. Darwin said he would not object to cutting it out completely. Jo said that they do still provide some administrative services over the fuel assistance program. The Selectboard supported the TM budget request and we will revisit next year.

Burch House: There were no issues with this budget.

Tri-County CAP Homeless Outreach: Jo said that the Town works often with this entity. There were no issues with this budget.

Good Shepherd Ecumenical Food Pantry: Darwin said that basically they would be swapping money for the rent payment; he said that Ed Ballam stated during the presentation for their request that the food bank is giving away food to other food banks so he has an issue with this request. Jo said that because of storage and spoiling they do give away food if they are full of if the food will be going bad. Jo felt it was a clearer picture to show the revenue coming in for rent and the money going out for the appropriation. Darwin is not in favor of the amount, he would maybe support a smaller amount. The majority of the Board supported the warrant article with the exception of Darwin.

Court Street Arts at Alumni Hall: Chris asked if they had sold memberships like they had been asked to. Jo said that they did. There Board supports this budget.

Capital Reserves: Darwin would like to see \$10,000 added to the vehicle capital reserve budget which would be about a 3 cent increase to the tax rate. With the reduction of the recycling amount the tax rate will still be down. There was discussion about putting more money away in capital reserves for the future. Darwin said he had to give credit to the Woodsville Fire Department for putting money aside for the purchase of the air packs. The Board supported the Capital Reserve budget with the \$10,000 increase.

The discussion went back to the payroll increases. Chris Luurtsema recommends that the Trustee of Trust Fund be upped to \$300 and the Treasurer goes up to \$2500; the Board concurred.

Mike Bonanno made a motion to move forward with the budget as amended, seconded by Chris Luurtsema. All were in favor. There was more discussion about the salaries and it was felt that was part of the approval.

Chris Luurtsema thanked Jo for her work.

Adjourn Meeting

Mike Bonanno made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25seconded by Chris Luurtsema. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes transcribed by Jo Lacaillade